

2005 OMB PART – Future Combat Systems and Modularity Land Warfare

Lessons Learned

Background. PART is an in depth process that requires the expertise of multiple functional areas across the ARSTAF and Secretariat. The key to success is starting early and reading all the PART documents, manuals and instructions on the OMB PART web site found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/part/> . This site not only provides the instructions for the PART, but as important, the PART schedule. The schedule is the driving force behind the PART for there are numerous milestones along the way that must be adhered to. Following is the 2005 schedule that shows the PART is a year long process requiring multiple inputs.

2005 PART Schedule

5-Apr	Agency first PART draft + evidence due to OMB (BPI deliverable)
Mid Apr-June 30	Continuing PART discussions between agencies and OMB
30-Jun	Agencies locked out of PART (i.e., cannot make changes online and cannot upload spreadsheets)
July 15-29	Internal OMB PART consistency check
12-Aug	OMB passes back PARTs and PART summaries to agencies
19-Aug	Agency appeals and comments due to OMB
2-Sep	All appeals resolved
9-Sep	Finalized PART and summaries due
15-Nov	Agencies submit updated performance data via PARTweb
6-Feb	PARTs published with President's Budget

Start Early and Start in Earnest

a. Early identification of the correct Program Manager The selection of the PM should be made not based on their familiarity with the PART process but instead based on the expertise in the subject area. For the FCS and Modularity PART, a PM was initially assigned and subsequently changed a month and a half later, slowing the process and creating a “catch up” environment from the start. As soon as possible after OMB identifies a new PART, a PM must be assigned and they should attend OMB PART training if available.

b. Early identification of all Subject Matter Experts (SME) and functional area stakeholders. The FCS and Modularity PART encompassed a wide range of functional areas and required the involvement of the G3, G8, ASA FM&C, ASAALT, TRADOC and PM FCS. The PAO acts as the integrator of all involved stake holders and should identify points of contact early on in the process to form a PART Tiger Team.

c. Early involvement of senior leadership. Senior leaders (GO and SES) need to be brought into the process early to 1.) provide guidance and 2.) provide top cover and add emphasis to the effort.

d. While not done in the FCS and Modularity PART, it would have been beneficial once all the stake holders and functionals were identified to issue an HQDA tasker identifying all the offices involved and requiring them to provide a POC for the duration of the effort.

PART POC at HQDA

PART is becoming a way of life for not only DoD but the Army as well. I realize ASA (FM&C) is in the process of codifying and formalizing the process at HQDA and this effort should also include an office that can provide guidance and mentorship throughout the PART process as well.

Defining the PART

a. The FCS and Modular Force PART is actually two PARTs in one. It got confusing when we were talking about the two Army subjects : FCS and Modularity. I believe these should have been separate and distinct. FCS we know is a program that can be tracked to a budget line item of detail, Modularity cannot. It is a transformation process. These two items should have their own PART ratings. If we could turn back the clock, the Army should have pushed back from the start to have this separated into two PART assessments. A lesson learned from this is that we, the Army and OSD, must identify up front problem areas in the scope of the PART. If we had educated OMB from the start, OMB would have probably agreed to separate the two.

OMB Involvement:

Since PART is an OMB program, it is imperative that an OMB analyst is involved in the PART process from the start and stays involved throughout the process. Although we had excellent AO level meetings, it might have been more helpful to have the OMB analyst with us during more of the meetings. It may have streamlined the process of asking questions only OMB could answer. Also a good congenial working relationship with OMB is key.

OMB Education:

Early in the PART process it was evident that much of OMBs knowledge of FCS and Modularity came directly from GAO reports, CBO reports and other sources outside the Army. PAOs and SMEs must be attuned to this and ensure that OMB hears and understands the Army's story. This can be accomplished by regularly inviting OMB to IPT meetings, information briefings, and providing the appropriate documentation and evidence.

On related note, OMB analysts are not well versed in Army lingo and acronyms. Never assume that something that seems common place in an Army or DoD environment will be understood by OMB. Explanations, evidence and comments must be as acronym free as possible, written in plain English and to the point so that even a layman would understand.